

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) In a machine for inflating and sealing air-filled packing cushions;

a roll of prefabricated film material having two layers which are sealed together to form a longitudinally extending ~~inflation~~ channel near one edge of the material, rows of chambers extending across the material, flow passageways interconnecting the chambers in each of the rows, and inlet passageways extending between the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel and one of the chambers in each of the rows;

a pair of spaced apart, horizontally extending rollers on which the roll of film material rests;

an air injector which is connected to a source of air, positioned below the rollers, and extends in an upward direction for injecting air into the ~~inflation channel and~~ chambers to inflate the cushions;

a sealing unit for forming a longitudinally extending seal across the inlet passageways after the cushions are inflated; and

~~means for feeding~~ a feed mechanism for withdrawing the film material in a generally downward direction from the roll past the ~~inflation tube~~ air injector and the sealing unit.

2. (original) The machine of Claim 1 wherein the sealing unit includes a cylindrical heating element and a wheel which are urged together, with the axis of the heating

element being perpendicular to the axis of the wheel and the heating element being exposed for direct contact with the film material.

3. (original) The machine of Claim 2 wherein the heating element comprises a stainless steel rod.

4. (currently amended) A machine for making air-filled packing cushions from a roll of prefabricated film material having two layers which are sealed together to form a longitudinally extending ~~inflation~~ channel near one edge of the material, a plurality of chambers to one side of the channel, and inlet passageways extending laterally between the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel and the chambers, comprising:

a pair of spaced apart, horizontally extending rollers on which the roll of film material rests;

an air injector which is connected to a source of air, positioned below the rollers, and extends in an upward direction for injecting air into the ~~inflation channel and~~ chambers to inflate the cushions;

a sealing unit for forming a longitudinally extending seal across the inlet passageways after the cushions are inflated; and

~~means for feeding~~ a feed mechanism for withdrawing the film material in a generally downward direction from the roll past the ~~inflation tube~~ air injector and the sealing unit.

5. (previously presented) The machine of Claim 4 wherein the sealing unit includes a cylindrical heating element and a wheel which are urged together, with the axis of the heating element being perpendicular to the axis of the wheel and the heating element being exposed for direct contact with the film material.

6. (original) The machine of Claim 5 wherein the heating element comprises a stainless steel rod.

7. (currently amended) In a method of making air-filled packing cushions from a roll of prefabricated film material having two layers which are sealed together to form a longitudinally extending ~~inflation~~ channel near one edge of the material, a plurality of chambers to one side of the channel, and inlet passageways extending laterally between the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel and the chambers, the steps of:

resting the roll of film material on a pair of spaced apart, horizontally extending rollers;

feeding the film material from the roll in a downward direction to an air injector which ~~extends in an upward direction and communicates with the inflation channel~~ is positioned to direct air into the chambers;

introducing air into the chambers through the injector to inflate the cushions; and

forming a longitudinally extending seal across the inlet passageways after the cushions are inflated.

8-12. (cancelled)

13. (currently amended) A table-top machine for making air-filled packing cushions from a roll of prefabricated film material having a longitudinally extending ~~inflation~~ channel and a plurality of chambers which communicate with the ~~inflation~~ channel through laterally extending inlet passageways;

a cabinet which is adapted to rest on a relatively small horizontal supporting surface;

a pair of spaced apart, horizontally extending rollers on the upper side of the cabinet for receiving the roll of film material in such manner that the roll rests on the rollers;

a feed mechanism positioned toward the front of the cabinet for withdrawing the film material from the roll in a downward direction;

an ~~inflation tube~~ elongate member extending in an upward direction from the feed mechanism and adapted to be received in the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel of the film material that is withdrawn from the roll;

a source of air within the cabinet connected to ~~the inflation tube~~ an air injector for introducing air into the chambers to inflate the cushions; and

a sealing unit for forming a longitudinally extending seal in the film material between the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel and the cushions to close the inlet passageways after the cushions have been inflated.

14. (original) The table-top machine of Claim 13 wherein the sealing unit includes a cylindrical heating element and a wheel which are urged together, with the axis of the

heating element being perpendicular to the axis of the wheel and the heating element being exposed for direct contact with the film material.

15. (original) The table-top machine of Claim 14 wherein the heating element comprises a stainless steel rod.

16. (currently amended) The machine of Claim 4 wherein the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel is pinched closed by one of the rollers, and the air injector comprises an inflation tube which is positioned for injecting air into the longitudinally extending channel in a portion of the material which has been withdrawn from the roll, with the air in the longitudinally extending channel flowing around the roll only to the point where the channel is pinched closed by the roller.

17. (currently amended) The machine of Claim 16 wherein the film material is withdrawn from the roll about 90 to 180 degrees from the point where the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel is pinched closed by the roller.

18. (currently amended) The machine of Claim 4 wherein the air injector comprises an inflation tube which extends into the longitudinally extending channel, and the ~~means for feeding the film material from the roll~~ feed mechanism includes dual feed rollers positioned on opposite sides of the inflation tube for engagement with the film material on opposite sides of the longitudinally extending channel.

19. (currently amended) The method of Claim 7 wherein the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel is pinched closed by one of the rollers, and air is injected into the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel in a portion of the material which has been withdrawn from the roll, with the air in the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel flowing around the roll only to the point where the channel is pinched closed by the roller.

20. (currently amended) The method of Claim 19 wherein the film material is withdrawn from the roll about 90 to 180 degrees from the point where the ~~inflation~~ longitudinally extending channel is pinched closed by the roller.